



A Happier and Healthier Berkshire

Reading West Berkshire Wokingham

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Berkshire West will describe what we will do during the next 10 years, to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone living in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham

We have a number of possible areas we could include in the strategy.
Read on to find out more about each of them

Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people

- Differences in health can be caused by living in poverty, by not having good education or childcare available, by not being able to get a good job or through having problems getting health care
- In England, people living in poorer areas live shorter lives than those living in richer areas and often spend more of their life in poor health
- We want to make sure that everyone has the same chance to live a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are

Support vulnerable people to live healthy lives

- People can be vulnerable for many different reasons: ethnicity, disabilities, being a migrant, due to age or sexuality; it also includes people with complex needs, unpaid carers, homeless people, travellers and offenders
- Vulnerable people often need extra help to improve their health and wellbeing, for example finding ways to stop isolation, help to manage their conditions, help with education and employment and help to get the information they need to stay healthy
- By supporting the most vulnerable in our society we can make it fairer for everyone

Help families and young children in early years

- What happens during pregnancy and during the first 2 years of a child's life will affect how a child will grow, learn and how they will cope with challenges in the future
- Supporting parents wellbeing is essential: to be able to parent well, people need good relationships, and to be emotionally and financially secure. We want parents to have the support they need during the early years, whatever that support may be
- Valuing and supporting families and our youngest children will help us to create a strong economy and a society where everyone can be happier and healthier

Reduce the harm caused by addiction to substances (smoking, alcohol or drugs)

- Using these substances causes a lot of poor health and affects some people and communities more than others
- We want to create environments where people do not start using these substances; but also provide support and good quality services to help anyone stop when they choose to do so
- There is no safe level of smoking, alcohol or drug use but we want to reduce the harm caused to those using them and the people around them

Good Health and Wellbeing at work

- Ensuring everyone has the same chance to be in good employment and helping people at risk of poor health to stay in employment
- Having a good job, that pays a reasonable wage, helps to protect people against poor health. A healthy workforce is also good for business
- Helping employers to support a healthy inclusive workforce, being aware of the physical, mental and cultural needs of all workers

Physically Active Communities

- Not being active enough is one of the leading risk factors for death worldwide. Physical activity can reduce your risk of many diseases and also help emotional and mental wellbeing
- Supportive communities and being able to use green spaces can make it easier for people to walk, cycle or be physically active
- Communities and organisations can work together to overcome problems that people may face in becoming more physically active. This may be through developing new policies or by environmental change

Help households with significant health needs

- Having significant health needs is one of the major cases of poor quality of life in England. People with several medical conditions often have longer stays in hospital
- We want to inform, educate and empower people with significant health needs to have a better quality of life and also support those caring for people with these needs, as this can affect their own health.
- This may be through helping to prevent medical problems, supporting people to be diagnosed earlier, providing them with the information they need and by ensuring they are looked after by high quality services

Extra support for anyone who has been affected by mental or physical trauma in childhood

- Children who have stress in childhood can be affected in the long term. Stresses may include: being abused, not being cared for properly, living in poverty, having parents who argued constantly, or had anxiety or depression, losing a parent to prison or the death of someone close to them
- Having the right support can protect children and help them to cope with the events they experience
- Organisations that recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma in children, can make sure their service is designed in a way to prevent any further negative experience

Build strong, resilient and socially connected communities

- Feeling isolated or lonely can affect both emotional and physical health. It can lead to depression, poor sleep, a weaker immune system and heart problems
- When people live in supportive communities, they are better able to help each other cope with challenges such as pressures at school or work, or changes in life like becoming a new parent
- We want to help our residents to live, work and play in places that support and promote health and reduce isolation

Good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people

- More children and young people than ever are reaching out for help with their mental health. We want to support every child to be resilient.
- By developing positive parenting and good attachment, we can help families support the health and emotional wellbeing of their children and young people.
- We want to promote positive mental health for all and to ensure that, when needed, children and young people can get the best possible mental health support to help overcome life's difficulties

Good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

- Having good mental health affects both the quality of your life and how long you will live for. But 1 in every 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England.
- Our emotional wellbeing is affected by many things such as housing, poverty, education, employment and our physical health. Having poor mental health can affect someone's ability to get a good education or to get a job
- By promoting good mental health as a priority for everyone, we can ensure people get the right help and support at the right time and also help those with poor mental health and wellbeing to remain in work